



Northeastern Illinois PUBLIC TRANSIT Task Force

December 6, 2013

Joseph G. Costello
Executive Director
Regional Transportation Authority
175 West Jackson Blvd., Suite 1650
Chicago, IL 60604

Dear Mr. Costello:

Thank you for your letter dated September 24, 2013, in response to our letter dated September 19, 2013 and the questions enclosed therein. We appreciate the time and effort that you have already invested and continue to invest in working with us to improve and strengthen the northeastern Illinois public transit system. As we review the information that you have provided, we would appreciate clarification on some of your responses to our earlier questions as well as information on matters not previously raised.

Clarification on Prior Questions

3. In connection with your response to question 3, please describe the process that is followed when a conflict of interest is identified and the actions that are or may be taken to resolve such conflict.

5. In connection with your response to question 5, please provide your recommendation on whether term limits should be imposed on Directors and if so, what said term limit should be.

9., 10., 11. In connection with your response to questions 9, 10, and 11, please describe with specificity the internal controls and monitoring related to employment actions or discrimination based upon political reasons or factors, and indicate when this policy was first put in place. In so doing, we ask that you direct us to the precise policy and page addressing this matter. In addition, please direct us to the pamphlet or material that your agency uses to disseminate policy positions that inform directors and employees that there shall be no discrimination or preferential treatment based upon political reasons or factors, and state when it was first used.

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Task Force established via
Executive Order 13-06



14. In response to question 14, you wrote that a whistleblower may contact the “RTA Ethics Officer” amongst other entities. For your agency’s Ethics Officer, please identify (a) the process for selection and hiring the individual to hold this office; (b) the performance and factors considered for any employment action taken in connection with this position, including, but not limited to a change in salary, promotion within the office, or termination from the position; (c) identify (i) the individual currently serving in this position and (ii) the individuals to have held this position for the last seven years; (d) the background and history for this office, including the creation of the position and its enabling resolution; and (e) any reports or findings issued by this office in the last seven years. This material can be provided in a manner to redact information considered “private” under Illinois FOIA and other related laws.

15. In response to question 15, you wrote that “[t]here have been no published OEIG or Executive Ethics reports regarding the RTA.” Please indicate the relevant time frame for this statement. Further, please indicate the individual or office responsible for conducting investigations of RTA for the seven years prior to the establishment of the OEIG’s authority over the RTA.

17. In response to question 17, you wrote that monthly training sessions are conducted by a law firm retained by the RTA, and employees are required to complete online workplace-related training. How often are employees required to complete ethics training?

19. In response to question 19, you wrote “RTA staff has been asked to direct all communications from elected officials to the RTA’s Government Affairs Department.” Please indicate how RTA addresses contact between directors or officers and elected officials, or their representatives, concerning official business. Further, please provide copies of any correspondence or notes, records, or logs regarding communications, including, but not limited to phone calls, letters, and email, between the Government Affairs Department and elected officials, or their representatives, regarding hiring, firing, or promotions of executives or employees, and purchasing and procurement, during the last three years. Further, please describe any known exceptions to this general practice, and provide any correspondence or notes, records, or logs regarding communications between RTA officers, employees, or directors and elected officials, or their representatives, regarding hiring, firing, or promotions of

executives or employees, and purchasing and procurement, during the last three years. The responsive material can be provided in a manner to redact information considered “private” under Illinois FOIA and other related laws.

23. In response to question 23, you wrote that RTA makes no inquiry “into current or prospective employees’ familial relationships, nor is any such relationship considered in the hiring process.” Please describe the process by which RTA actively enforces section 7.13, Nepotism, of the RTA Employee Handbook.

Additional Information

1. Please provide any documents reflecting any contacts by persons outside RTA regarding the hiring and/or promotion and/or granting of salary increases (or requests for hiring, promotion or salary increases) for Members of the RTA Senior Executive Team during the last five years. The materials can be provided in a manner to redact information considered “private” under Illinois FOIA and other related laws. The materials should include, but are not limited to, letters of reference and notes or memoranda or emails involving references by outside persons, including but not limited to, elected or appointed officials.
2. Please provide a comprehensive list of all internal or external investigations, audits, analyses, or related reviews of RTA or its employees during the last seven years, including those conducted by any inspectors general, the OEIG, Illinois Department of Transportation, and the U.S. Department of Transportation, and whether we may arrange to review these documents. This list and the subsequent materials can be provided in a manner to redact information considered “private” under Illinois FOIA and other related laws. Further, please describe the policy of RTA regarding whether reports of past investigations are available for review by the general public.
3. Please provide copies of any records of discussions by the RTA Board of Directors during the last seven years regarding patronage or any issues related thereto, including, but not limited to, those in Board minutes and presentations to the Board.
4. Please identify the reasons why people and/or entities lobby your Agency. In addition, please provide any and all policies, procedures, and

controls in place regarding the people and/or entities who lobby your Agency.

5. Identify the agency's revolving door policies, procedures, and controls governing the relationship and interactions between the agency and current or departing board members or agency employees, specifically, but not limited to, procurement, lobbying, and other agency issues. Provide copies of any such policies, rules, regulations, or requirements and identify the date of implementation.

6. Identify the RTA's revolving door policy regarding (a) current or departing board members of RTA and their service or business relationships with CTA, Metra, and Pace and (b) RTA's relationship with current or departing board members of CTA, Metra, and Pace. Provide copies of any such policies, rules, regulations, or requirements and identify the date of implementation.

7. Identify the policies, procedures, and controls in place regarding your agency's (a) procurement process, including bidding and price tracking; and (b) communications between board members or employees and past, current, or potential vendors regarding agency business and procurement. Provide copies of any such policies, rules, regulations, or requirements and identify the date of implementation.

8. In connection with procurement, identify the policies, procedures, and controls in place regarding your agency's (a) requirements and goals regarding the involvement of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises ("DBE"); (b) public reporting and disclosure regarding the success or progress of those requirements and goals; (c) agency procedure for validating an entity's DBE status; and (d) communications by and between the agency, or board members or employees thereof, and public officials on behalf of DBEs. Provide copies of any such policies, rules, regulations, or requirements and identify the date of implementation.

9. Identify the agency's policies, procedures, and controls in place regarding debarment and suspension of individuals or companies seeking to do business with your agency, including (a) what steps, if any, the agency takes to determine if a vendor or contractor has been debarred or suspended; (b) what practices the agency undertakes to notify the relevant authorities of conduct by vendors or contractors that could lead to debarment or suspension; and (c) what procedures, if any, are in place to share such information with CTA, Pace, and Metra.

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We would be grateful for your response via e-mail to Sarah.Kurmann@Illinois.gov by December 18. Thank you for your commitment to the northeastern Illinois transit system.

Sincerely,

Ann L. Schneider
Co-Chair

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ann L. Schneider", followed by a horizontal line.

George Ranney, Jr.
Co-Chair

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "George Ranney, Jr.", followed by a horizontal line.